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C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 002475

SIPDIS

DHS FOR ACTING U/S BEARDSWORTH
EMBASSY FOR DHS SOTOMAYOR

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10 YEARS

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SUBJECT: ACTING DHS U/S BEARDSWORTH MEETS WITH GOES
GOVERNANCE MINISTER FIGUEROA

Classified By: CDA Michael A. Butler for reasons 1.4(b) & (d)

11. (C) Summary: On September 2, Acting DHS U/S Beardsworth and Minister of Governance Rene Figueroa met to discuss border and migration issues. The meeting focused on violent (mostly gang members) and non-violent (mostly immigration violators) deportees. GOES officials demanded more background information on violent criminals deported from the United States. Beardsworth stated his willingness to work with them on the issue. He described the current backlog of Salvadorans awaiting removal and expressed the need to expedite the issuance of Salvadoran travel documents for non-violent offenders. Figueroa agreed to enter into technical discussions on the issues raised by Beardsworth. END SUMMARY.

12. (SBU) Acting U/S Beardsworth and GOES Governance Minister Rene Figueroa met on September 2, to review border and migration issues. Also in attendance were Ambassador Barclay, DCM Butler, GOES Vice Minister Rodrigo Avila and GOES Vice Minister Silvia Aguilar. GOES officials focused their presentation on the deportation of Salvadorans who entered the U.S. illegally, committed serious crimes, and are deported to El Salvador at the conclusion of their prison sentence. They stressed the difficulty the GOES faces in assimilating these individuals due to the lack of information regarding the names, gang affiliations, and criminal histories of deportees. They noted that Mexico has a prisoner transfer treaty with the U.S., and that criminal deportees who are returned to Mexico must complete their original sentences. GOES officials also objected to reducing the sentences of violent offenders in order to deport them quicker. They expressed their willingness to explore how criminals could serve their full sentences, either in the U.S. or in El Salvador.

13. (C) Beardsworth agreed that information should be shared between the two countries as U.S. and international agreements permit. He reminded GOES officials that they could sign the OAS treaty on prisoner transfers to initiate a prisoner transfer agreement. He stated his willingness to increase cooperation in criminal investigations and information sharing. Beardsworth moved the discussion from violent criminal detainees to the much larger population of non-violent detainees. He stated that approximately 100 Salvadorans are detained for illegal entry into the U.S. each day, but that DHS can only remove 100 Salvadorans per week. He emphasized that the failure to deport Salvadorans more quickly is caused by the GOES inability to issue requisite travel documents in a timely manner. To assist the GOES in the issuance of Salvadoran travel documents, Mr. Beardsworth proposed that the USG centralize the location of Salvadoran deportees, allowing a single consular officer to provide travel document services. He also stated that the U.S. might be open to paying a small processing fee to expedite the production of travel documents. Beardsworth emphasized that DHS is open to any suggestions or requests for assistance that will expedite the issuance of Salvadoran travel documents.

14. (SBU) Avila noted that the GOES had a positive relationship with the USG and that the GOES was ready to negotiate. He stated that even if progress could be made regarding non-violent returnees, the crime situation in El Salvador required the prompt focus on returnees with criminal records. GOES officials agreed to technical discussions in coming weeks of issues raised by Beardsworth.

15. (U) This cable was not cleared by U/S Beardsworth prior to his departure.
Butler